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SOMALI PRESIDENT OUTLINES 'ROADMAP TO PEACE'

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Hassan Sheikh Mohamud, president of the Federal Republic of Somalia, said he has begun to lay the foundation for a stable and effective government, but it will take time to reach the ultimate goal of uniting his country under one flag.

Mohamud made these remarks to an audience of about 200 in the Ohio Union on the campus of The Ohio State University on Monday, September 23. Ohio State was his last stop on a two-day visit to Columbus, which is home to some 30,000 Somalis, the second largest Somali population in the United States.

Elected president of Somalia in 2012, Mohamud is leading the first constitutional government of Somalia in 20 years. Over the past 12 months, Mohamud has focused his efforts on four priorities: security, legal reform, public finances and economic recovery.

"We are fighting a counterterrorist campaign at the same time we are rebuilding our security forces. There is absolutely no room for complacency," Mohamud said. "We understand the risk is high and we are in a fragile situation. Political stability is the first step that underpins the goal of federalizing the government. People are willing ... to move the effort forward."

A long-time educator and former dean of Simad University in Somalia, Mohamud has identified education as another one of his key initiatives. As a result, Somalia is redeveloping its public education system that had been destroyed as a result of the civil war. In the next three years, Mohamud envisions 1 million students attending public schools in Somalia – for the first time in 22 years. He encouraged educational institutions, including Ohio State, to help transform education in Somalia through intellectual capacity building.

Optimistic about Somalia's future, Mohamud shared the vibrancy of his country with restaurants, hotels and markets busy with activity, and described the strong economic endowments already in place.

And to Ohio State Somali students in the audience Mohamud had just four words for them: "Your country needs you." He encouraged these students to return to Somalia after they graduate to help rebuild the country and participate in its transformation.

Elected president of Somalia in 2012, Mohamud is leading the first constitutional government of Somalia in 20 years. Listed by Time magazine as one of the 100 most influential people in the world, he has been a civic and political activist, a university professor and dean and is the founder and chairman of the Peace and Development Party.

Photos from the president's visit to campus are available on the [John Glenn School of Public Affairs Flickr page](#). Video of the address is available on [Glenn School channel on YouTube](#).

The presentation by President Mohamud was supported by The Columbus Council on World Affairs, Somali Student Association, John Glenn School of Public Affairs, Office of International Affairs, Center for African Studies, Department of African American and African Studies, and Mershon Center for International Security Studies. Learn more about [Ohio State's Somali connections](#).


About President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud

Born in the central Hiran region in 1955, President Mohamud studied engineering at Somali National University and became a lecturer there in 1981. Five years later he went to India to study, obtaining an MBA from Bhopal University. He stayed in Somalia during the civil war, working as a consultant with non-governmental groups, U.N. organizations and on several peace initiatives.



In 1999, he helped start Simad University and was its dean for 10 years. He founded the Peace and Development Party in 2011 and was elected a member of parliament 2012.

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